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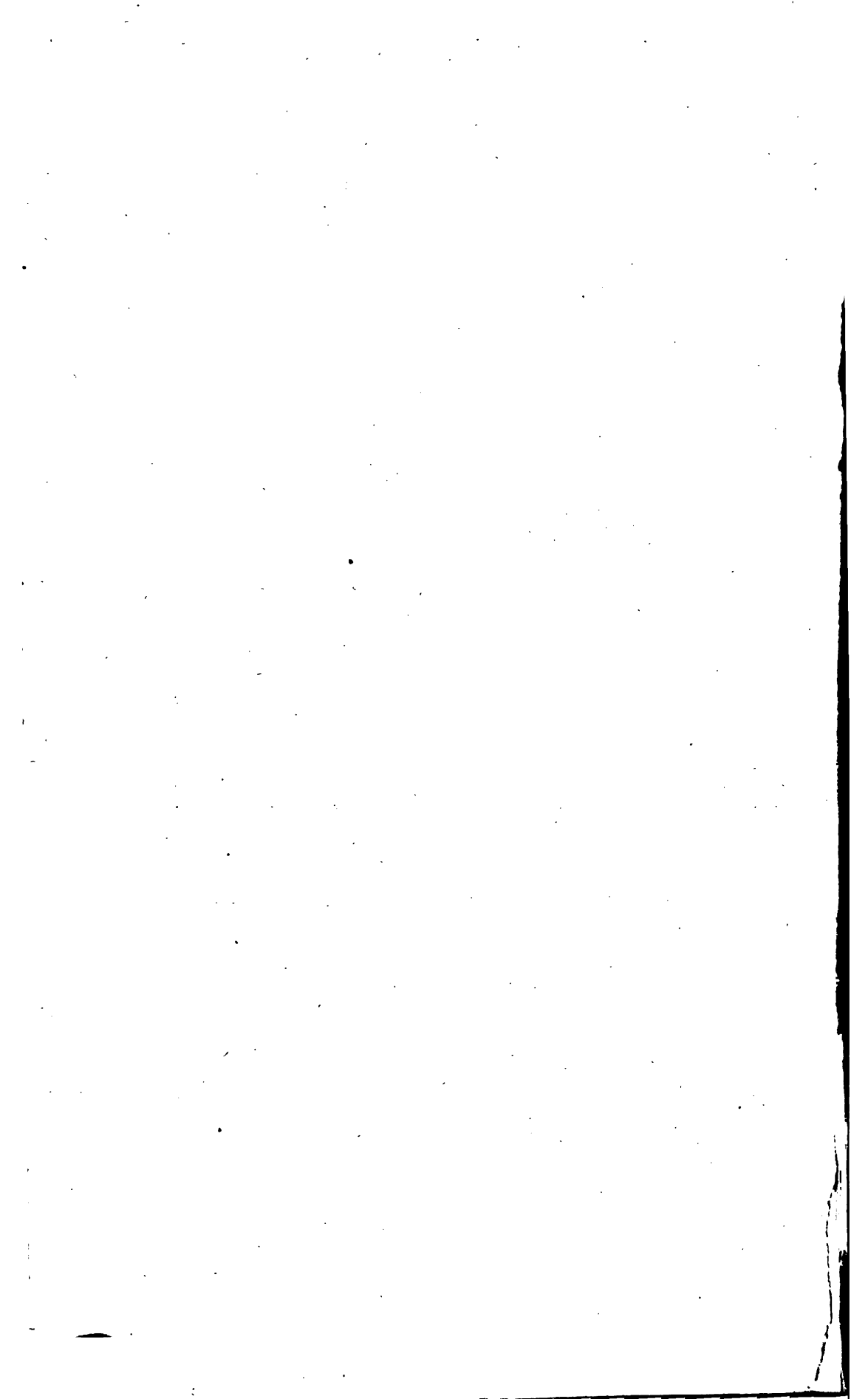


1877
L. M. Bellow

BALLADS

AND

OTHER POEMS.



BALLADS

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW,

AUTHOR OF "VOICES OF THE NIGHT,"

"HYPERION," &c.

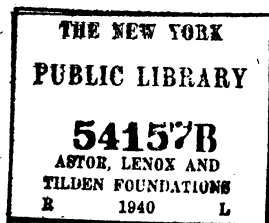
THIRD EDITION.

CAMBRIDGE:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN OWEN.

M DCCC XLII.

M. L.



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PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY.

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PREFACE.

THERE is one poem in this volume, in reference to which a few introductory remarks may be useful. It is *The Children of the Lord's Supper*, from the Swedish of Bishop Tegnér; a poem which enjoys no inconsiderable reputation in the North of Europe, and for its beauty and simplicity merits the attention of English readers. It is an Idyl, descriptive of scenes in a Swedish village; and belongs to the same class of poems, as the *Luise* of Voss and the *Hermann und Dorothea* of Göthe. But the Swedish Poet has been

guided by a surer taste, than his German predecessors. His tone is pure and elevated; and he rarely, if ever, mistakes what is trivial for what is simple.

There is something patriarchal still lingering about rural life in Sweden, which renders it a fit theme for song. Almost primeval simplicity reigns over that Northern land,—almost primeval solitude and stillness. You pass out from the gate of the city, and, as if by magic, the scene changes to a wild, woodland landscape. Around you are forests of fir. Over head hang the long, fan-like branches, trailing with moss, and heavy with red and blue cones. Under foot is a carpet of yellow leaves; and the air is warm and balmy. On a wooden bridge you cross a little silver stream; and anon come forth into a pleasant and sunny land of farms. Wooden fences

divide the adjoining fields. Across the road are gates, which are opened by troops of children. The peasants take off their hats as you pass; you sneeze, and they cry, "God bless you." The houses in the villages and smaller towns are all built of hewn timber, and for the most part painted red. The floors of the taverns are strewn with the fragrant tips of fir boughs. In many villages there are no taverns, and the peasants take turns in receiving travellers. The thrifty housewife shows you into the best chamber, the walls of which are hung round with rude pictures from the Bible; and brings you her heavy silver spoons, — an heirloom, — to dip the curdled milk from the pan. You have oaten cakes baked some months before; or bread with anise-seed and coriander in it, or perhaps a little pine bark.

Meanwhile the sturdy husband has brought

his horses from the plough, and harnessed them to your carriage. Solitary travellers come and go in uncouth one-horse chaises. Most of them have pipes in their mouths, and hanging around their necks in front, a leather wallet, in which they carry tobacco, and the great bank notes of the country, as large as your two hands. You meet, also, groups of Dalekarlian peasant women, travelling homeward or town-ward in pursuit of work. They walk barefoot, carrying in their hands their shoes, which have high heels under the hollow of the foot, and soles of birch bark.

Frequent, too, are the village churches, standing by the road-side, each in its own little garden of Gethsemane. In the parish register great events are doubtless recorded. Some old king was christened or buried in that church; and a little sexton, with a rusty

key, shows you the baptismal font, or the coffin. In the church-yard are a few flowers, and much green grass ; and daily the shadow of the church spire, with its long tapering finger, counts the tombs, representing a dial-plate of human life, on which the hours and minutes are the graves of men. The stones are flat, and large, and low, and perhaps sunken, like the roofs of old houses. On some are armorial bearings ; on others only the initials of the poor tenants, with a date, as on the roofs of Dutch cottages. They all sleep with their heads to the westward. Each held a lighted taper in his hand when he died ; and in his coffin were placed his little heart-treasures, and a piece of money for his last journey. Babes that came lifeless into the world were carried in the arms of gray-haired old men to the only cradle they ever slept in ;

and in the shroud of the dead mother were laid the little garments of the child, that lived and died in her bosom. And over this scene the village pastor looks from his window in the stillness of midnight, and says in his heart, "How quietly they rest, all the departed!"

Near the church-yard gate stands a poor-box, fastened to a post by iron bands, and secured by a padlock, with a sloping wooden roof to keep off the rain. If it be Sunday, the peasants sit on the church steps and con their psalm-books. Others are coming down the road with their beloved pastor, who talks to them of holy things from beneath his broad-brimmed hat. He speaks of fields and harvests, and of the parable of the sower, that went forth to sow. He leads them to the Good Shepherd, and to the pleasant pastures

of the spirit-land. He is their patriarch, and, like Melchizedek, both priest and king, though he has no other throne than the church pulpit. The women carry psalm-books in their hands, wrapped in silk handkerchiefs, and listen devoutly to the good man's words. But the young men, like Gallio, care for none of these things. They are busy counting the plaits in the kirtles of the peasant girls, their number being an indication of the wearer's wealth. It may end in a wedding.

I will endeavour to describe a village wedding in Sweden. It shall be in summer time, that there may be flowers, and in a southern province, that the bride may be fair. The early song of the lark and of chanticleer are mingling in the clear morning air, and the sun, the heavenly bridegroom with golden locks, arises in the east, just as our earthly

bridegroom with yellow hair, arises in the south. In the yard there is a sound of voices and trampling of hoofs, and horses are led forth and saddled. The steed that is to bear the bridegroom has a bunch of flowers upon his forehead, and a garland of corn-flowers around his neck. Friends from the neighbouring farms come riding in, their blue cloaks streaming to the wind; and finally the happy bridegroom, with a whip in his hand, and a monstrous nosegay in the breast of his black jacket, comes forth from his chamber; and then to horse and away, towards the village where the bride already sits and waits.

Foremost rides the Spokesman, followed by some half dozen village musicians. Next comes the bridegroom between his two grooms-men, and then forty or fifty friends and wedding guests, half of them perhaps with pistols

and guns in their hands. A kind of baggage-wagon brings up the rear, laden with food and drink for these merry pilgrims. At the entrance of every village stands a triumphal arch, adorned with flowers and ribands and evergreens; and as they pass beneath it the wedding guests fire a salute, and the whole procession stops. And straight from every pocket flies a black-jack, filled with punch or brandy. It is passed from hand to hand among the crowd; provisions are brought from the wagon, and after eating and drinking and hurrahing, the procession moves forward again, and at length draws near the house of the bride. Four heralds ride forward to announce that a knight and his attendants are in the neighbouring forest, and pray for hospitality. "How many are you?" asks the bride's father. "At least three hundred," is the answer; and to

this the host replies, "Yes; were you seven times as many, you should all be welcome; and in token thereof receive this cup." Whereupon each herald receives a can of ale; and soon after the whole jovial company comes storming into the farmer's yard, and, riding round the May-pole, which stands in the centre, alights amid a grand salute and flourish of music.

In the hall sits the bride, with a crown upon her head and a tear in her eye, like the Virgin Mary in old church paintings. She is dressed in a red boddice and kirtle, with loose linen sleeves. There is a gilded belt around her waist; and around her neck strings of golden beads, and a golden chain. On the crown rests a wreath of wild roses, and below it another of cypress. Loose over her shoulders falls her flaxen hair; and her blue inno-

cent eyes are fixed upon the ground. O thou good soul ! thou hast hard hands, but a soft heart ! Thou art poor. The very ornaments thou wearest are not thine. They have been hired for this great day. Yet art thou rich ; rich in health, rich in hope, rich in thy first, young, fervent love. The blessing of heaven be upon thee ! So thinks the parish priest, as he joins together the hands of bride and bridegroom, saying in deep, solemn tones, — “ I give thee in marriage this damsel, to be thy wedded wife in all honor, and to share the half of thy bed, thy lock and key, and every third penny which you two may possess, or may inherit, and all the rights which Upland’s laws provide, and the holy king Erik gave.”

The dinner is now served, and the bride sits between the bridegroom and the priest. The Spokesman delivers an oration after the

ancient custom of his fathers. He interlards it well with quotations from the Bible; and invites the Saviour to be present at this marriage feast, as he was at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee. The table is not sparingly set forth. Each makes a long arm, and the feast goes cheerly on. Punch and brandy pass round between the courses, and here and there a pipe is smoked, while waiting for the next dish. They sit long at table; but, as all things must have an end, so must a Swedish dinner. Then the dance begins. It is led off by the bride and the priest, who perform a solemn minuet together. Not till after midnight comes the Last Dance. The girls form a ring around the bride, to keep her from the hands of the married women, who endeavour to break through the magic circle, and seize their new sister. After long struggling they

succeed ; and the crown is taken from her head and the jewels from her neck, and her bodice is unlaced and her kirtle taken off ; and like a vestal virgin clad all in white she goes, but it is to her marriage chamber, not to her grave ; and the wedding guests follow her with lighted candles in their hands. And this is a village bridal.

Nor must I forget the suddenly changing seasons of the Northern clime. There is no long and lingering spring, unfolding leaf and blossom one by one ; — no long and lingering autumn, pompous with many-colored leaves and the glow of Indian summers. But winter and summer are wonderful, and pass into each other. The quail has hardly ceased piping in the corn, when winter from the folds of trailing clouds sows broad-cast over the land snow, icicles, and rattling hail. The days

wane apace. Ere long the sun hardly rises above the horizon, or does not rise at all. The moon and the stars shine through the day; only, at noon, they are pale and wan, and in the southern sky a red, fiery glow, as of sunset, burns along the horizon, and then goes out. And pleasantly under the silver moon, and under the silent, solemn stars, ring the steel-shoes of the skaters on the frozen sea, and voices, and the sound of bells.

And now the Northern Lights begin to burn, faintly at first, like sunbeams playing in the waters of the blue sea. Then a soft crimson glow tinges the heavens. There is a blush on the cheek of night. The colors come and go; and change from crimson to gold, from gold to crimson. The snow is stained with rosy light. Twofold from the zenith, east and west, flames a fiery sword;

and a broad band passes athwart the heavens, like a summer sunset. Soft purple clouds come sailing over the sky, and through their vapory folds the winking stars shine white as silver. With such pomp as this is Merry Christmas ushered in, though only a single star heralded the first Christmas. And in memory of that day the Swedish peasants dance on straw; and the peasant girls throw straws at the timbered roof of the hall, and for every one that sticks in a crack shall a groomsmen come to their wedding. Merry Christmas indeed! For pious souls there shall be church songs and sermons, but for Swedish peasants, brandy and nut brown ale in wooden bowls; and the great Yulecake crowned with a cheese, and garlanded with apples, and upholding a three-armed candlestick over the Christmas feast. They may tell tales,

too, of Jöns Lundsbracka, and Lunkenfus, and the great Riddar Finke of Pingsdaga.*

And now the glad, leafy mid-summer, full of blossoms and the song of nightingales, is come! Saint John has taken the flowers and festival of heathen Balder; and in every village there is a May-pole fifty feet high, with wreaths and roses and ribands streaming in the wind, and a noisy weathercock on top, to tell the village whence the wind cometh and whither it goeth. The sun does not set till ten o'clock at night; and the children are at play in the streets an hour later. The windows and doors are all open, and you may sit and read till midnight without a candle. O how beautiful is the summer night, which is not night, but a sunless yet unclouded day, descending upon earth with dews, and shad-

* Titles of Swedish popular tales.

ows, and refreshing coolness! How beautiful the long, mild twilight, which like a silver clasp unites to-day with yesterday! How beautiful the silent hour, when Morning and Evening thus sit together, hand in hand, beneath the starless sky of midnight! From the church-tower in the public square the bell tolls the hour, with a soft, musical chime; and the watchman, whose watch-tower is the belfry, blows a blast in his horn, for each stroke of the hammer, and four times, to the four corners of the heavens, in a sonorous voice he chaunts, —

“Ho! watchman, ho!
Twelve is the clock!
God keep our town
From fire and brand
And hostile hand!
Twelve is the clock!”

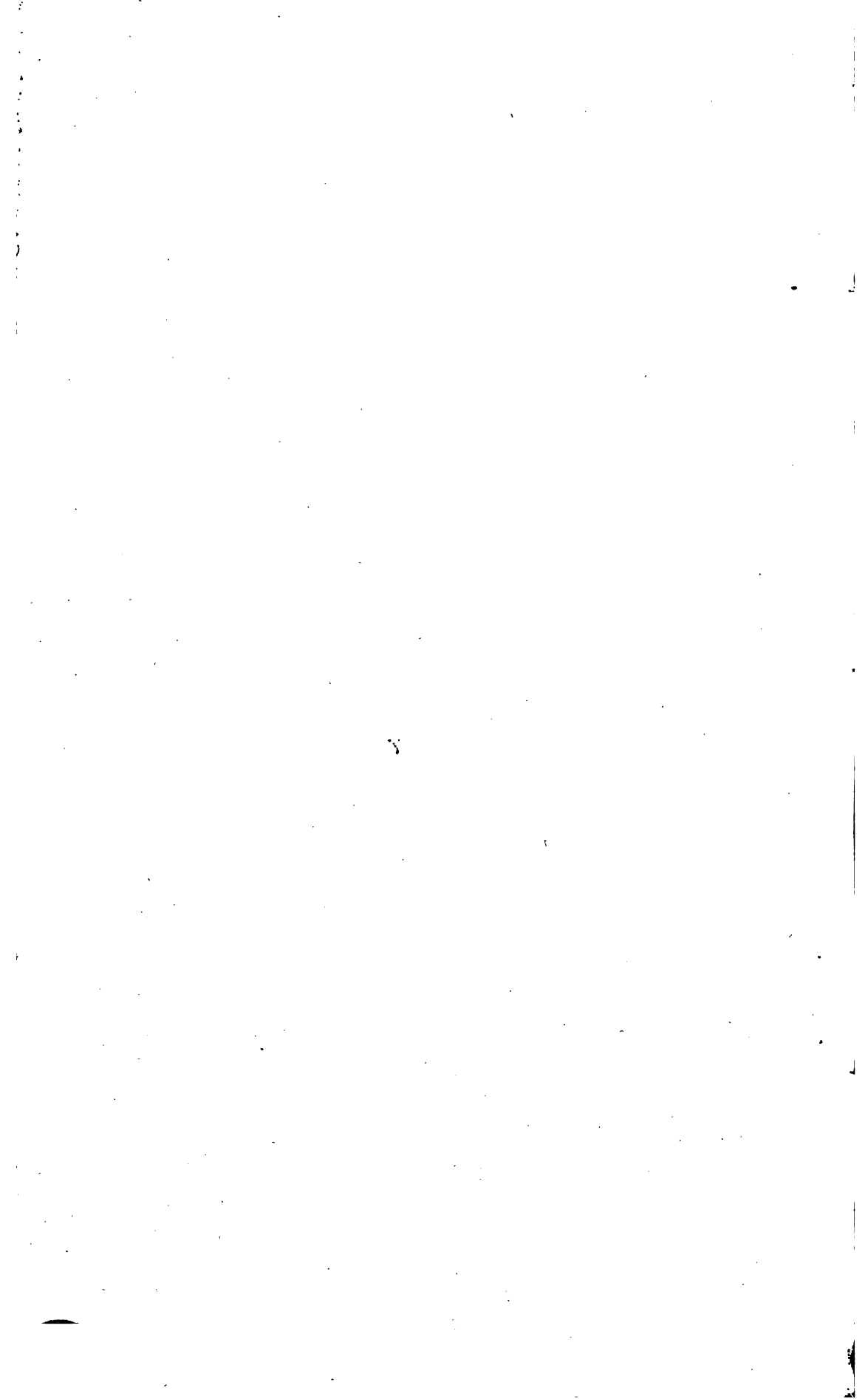
From his swallow's nest in the belfry he can see the sun all night long; and farther north

the priest stands at his door in the warm midnight, and lights his pipe with a common burning glass.

I trust that these remarks will not be deemed irrelevant to the poem, but will lead to a clearer understanding of it. The translation is literal, perhaps to a fault. In no instance have I done the author a wrong, by introducing into his work any supposed improvements or embellishments of my own. I have preserved even the measure; that inexorable hexameter, in which, it must be confessed, the motions of the English Muse are not unlike those of a prisoner dancing to the music of his chains; and perhaps, as Dr. Johnson said of the dancing dog, "the wonder is not that she should do it so well, but that she should do it at all."

Esaias Tegnér, the author of this poem, was born in the parish of By in Wärmeland, in the

year 1782. In 1799 he entered the University of Lund, as a student; and in 1812 was appointed Professor of Greek in that institution. In 1824 he became Bishop of Wexiö, which office he still holds. He stands first among all the poets of Sweden, living or dead. His principal work is Frithiofs Saga; one of the most remarkable poems of the age. This modern Scald has written his name in immortal runes. He is the glory and boast of Sweden; a prophet, honored in his own country, and adding one more to the list of great names, that adorn her history.



BALLADS

THE SKELETON IN ARMOUR.

[THE following Ballad was suggested to me while riding on the seashore at Newport. A year or two previous a skeleton had been dug up at Fall River, clad in broken and corroded armour; and the idea occurred to me of connecting it with the Round Tower at Newport, generally known hitherto as the Old Wind-Mill, though now claimed by the Danes as a work of their early ancestors. Professor Rafn, in the *Mémoires de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord*, for 1838-1839, says;

“There is no mistaking in this instance the style in which the more ancient stone edifices of the North were constructed, the style which belongs to the Roman or Ante-Gothic architecture, and which, especially after the time of Charlemagne, diffused itself from Italy over the whole of the West and North of Europe, where it continued to predominate

until the close of the 12th century; that style, which some authors have, from one of its most striking characteristics, called the round arch style, the same which in England is denominated Saxon and sometimes Norman architecture.

“On the ancient structure in Newport there are no ornaments remaining, which might possibly have served to guide us in assigning the probable date of its erection. That no vestige whatever is found of the pointed arch, nor any approximation to it, is indicative of an earlier rather than of a later period. From such characteristics as remain, however, we can scarcely form any other inference than one, in which I am persuaded that all, who are familiar with Old-Northern architecture, will concur, THAT THIS BUILDING WAS ERECTED AT A PERIOD DECIDEDLY NOT LATER THAN THE 12TH CENTURY. This remark applies, of course, to the original building only, and not to the alterations that it subsequently received; for there are several such alterations in the upper part of the building which cannot be mistaken, and which were most likely occasioned by its being adapted in modern times to various uses, for example as the substructure of a wind-mill, and latterly as a hay magazine. To the same times may be referred the windows, the fire-place, and the apertures made above the columns. That this building

could not have been erected for a wind-mill, is what an architect will easily discern."

I will not enter into a discussion of the point. It is sufficiently well established for the purpose of a ballad; though doubtless many an honest citizen of Newport, who has passed his days within sight of the Round Tower, will be ready to exclaim with Sancho; "God bless me! did I not warn you to have a care of what you were doing, for that it was nothing but a wind-mill; and nobody could mistake it, but one who had the like in his head."]

"SPEAK! speak! thou fearful guest!

Who, with thy hollow breast

Still in rude armour drest,

Comest to daunt me!

Wrapt not in Eastern balms,

But with thy fleshless palms

Stretched, as if asking alms,

Why dost thou haunt me?"

Then, from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
 Gleam in December ;
And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
 From the heart's chamber.

“ I was a Viking old !
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told,
 No Saga taught thee !
Take heed, that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse !
 For this I sought thee.

“Far in the Northern Land,
By the wild Baltic’s strand;
I, with my childish hand,
 Tamed the ger-falcon ;
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
 Trembled to walk on.

“Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
 Fled like a shadow ;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf’s bark,
Until the soaring lark
 Sang from the meadow,

“ But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair’s crew,
O’er the dark sea I flew
 With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led ;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
 By our stern orders.

“ Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long Winter out ;
Often our midnight shout
 Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk’s tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail,
 Filled to o’erflowing.

“Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
 Burning yet tender ;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
 Fell their soft splendor.

“I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest’s shade
 Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest
Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
 By the hawk frightened.

“Bright in her father’s hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
 Chaunting his glory ;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter’s hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
 To hear my story.

“While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed,
And as the wind-gusts waft
 The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn,
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
 Blew the foam lightly.

“ She was a Prince’s child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
I was discarded !
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew’s flight,
Why did they leave that night
Her nest unguarded ?

“ Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me, —
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen ! —
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armed hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
With twenty horsemen.

“ Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind failed us ;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

“ And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
Death ! was the helmsman’s hail,
Death without quarter !
Mid-ships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel ;
Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water !

“As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
 With his prey laden,
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
 Bore I the maiden.

“Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o’er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
 Stretching to lea-ward ;
There for my lady’s bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
 Stands looking sea-ward.

“ There lived we many years ;
Time dried the maiden’s tears ;
She had forgot her fears,
 She was a mother ;
Death closed her mild blue eyes,
Under that tower she lies ;
Ne’er shall the sun arise
 On such another !

“ Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen !
Hateful to me were men,
 The sun-light hateful !
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
 O, death was grateful !

“ Thus, seamed with many scars
Bursting these prison bars,
Up to its native stars
My soul ascended !
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior’s soul,
Skoal ! to the Northland ! *skoal !* ” *
— Thus the tale ended.

* In Scandanavia this is the customary salutation when drinking a health. I have slightly changed the orthography of the word, in order to preserve the correct pronunciation.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.

It was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea ;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
With his pipe in his mouth,
And watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailòr,
Had sailed the Spanish Main,
“I pray thee, put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane.

“Last night, the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see !”
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the Northeast ;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain,
The vessel in its strength ;
She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither ! come hither ! my little daughtèr,
And do not tremble so ;
For I can weather the roughest gale,
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast ;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father ! I hear the church-bells ring,
O say, what may it be ?"
"T is a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast !"—
And he steered for the open sea.

“O father ! I hear the sound of guns,
O say, what may it be ?”
“Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea !”

“O father ! I see a gleaming light,
O say, what may it be ?”
But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That saved she might be ;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land ;
It was the sound of the trampling surf,
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board ;
Like a vessel of glass, she strove and sank,
Ho ! ho ! the breakers roared !

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes ;
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow !
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe !

THE LUCK OF EDENHALL.

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.

[The tradition, upon which this ballad is founded, and the "shards of the Luck of Edenhall," still exist in England. The goblet is in the possession of Sir Christopher Musgrave, Bart., of Eden Hall, Cumberland; and is not so entirely shattered, as the ballad leaves it.]

Of Edenhall, the youthful Lord
 Bids sound the festal trumpet's call;
 He rises at the banquet board,
 And cries, 'mid the drunken revellers all,
 "Now bring me the Luck of Edenhall!"

The butler hears the words with pain,
The house's oldest seneschal,
Takes slow from its silken cloth again
The drinking glass of crystal tall ;
They call it The Luck of Edenhall.

Then said the Lord ; " This glass to praise,
Fill with red wine from Portugal ! "
The gray-beard with trembling hand obeys ;
A purple light shines over all,
It beams from the Luck of Edenhall.

Then speaks the Lord, and waves it light,
" This glass of flashing crystal tall
Gave to my sires the Fountain-Sprite ;
She wrote in it ; *If this glass doth fall*
Farewell then, O Luck of Edenhall !

“’T was right a goblet the Fate should be
Of the joyous race of Edenhall !
Deep draughts drink we right willingly ;
And willingly ring, with merry call,
Kling ! klang ! to the Luck of Edenhall !”

First rings it deep, and full, and mild,
Like to the song of a nightingale ;
Then like the roar of a torrent wild ;
Then mutters at last like the thunder’s fall,
The glorious Luck of Edenhall.

“ For its keeper takes a race of might,
The fragile goblet of crystal tall ;
It has lasted longer than is right ;
Kling ! klang ! — with a harder blow than all
Will I try the Luck of Edenhall !”

As the goblet ringing flies apart,
Suddenly cracks the vaulted hall ;
And through the rift, the wild flames start ;
The guests in dust are scattered all,
With the breaking Luck of Edenhall !

In storms the foe, with fire and sword ;
He in the night had scaled the wall,
Slain by the sword lies the youthful Lord,
But holds in his hand the crystal tall,
The shattered Luck of Edenhall.

On the morrow the butler gropes alone,
The gray-beard in the desert hall,
He seeks his Lord's burnt skeleton,
He seeks in the dismal ruin's fall
The shards of the Luck of Edenhall.

“The stone wall,” saith he, “doth fall aside,
Down must the stately columns fall ;
Glass is this earth’s Luck and Pride ;
In atoms shall fall this earthly ball
One day like the Luck of Edenhall !”

THE ELECTED KNIGHT.

FROM THE DANISH.

[The following strange and somewhat mystical ballad is from Nyerup and Rabbek's *Danske Viser* of the Middle Ages. It seems to refer to the first preaching of Christianity in the North, and to the institution of Knight-Errantry. The three maidens I suppose to be Faith, Hope, and Charity. The irregularities of the original have been carefully preserved in the translation.]

SIR OLUF he rideth over the plain,
 Full seven miles broad and seven miles wide,
 But never, ah never can meet with the man
 A tilt with him dare ride.

He saw under the hill-side
A Knight full well equipped ;
His steed was black, his helm was barred ;
He was riding at full speed.

He wore upon his spurs
Twelve little golden birds ;
Anon he spurred his steed with a clang,
And there sat all the birds and sang.

He wore upon his mail
Twelve little golden wheels ;
Anon in eddies the wild wind blew,
And round and round the wheels they flew.

He wore before his breast
A lance that was poised in rest ;
And it was sharper than diamond-stone,
It made Sir Oluf's heart to groan.

He wore upon his helm,
A wreath of ruddy gold ;
And that gave him the Maidens Three,
The youngest was fair to behold.

Sir Oluf questioned the Knight eftsoon
If he were come from heaven down ;
“ Art thou Christ of Heaven,” quoth he,
“ So will I yield me unto thee.”

“ I am not Christ the Great,
Thou shalt not yield thee yet ;
I am an Unknown Knight,
Three modest Maidens have me bedight.”

“ Art thou a Knight elected,
And have three Maidens thee bedight ;
So shalt thou ride a tilt this day,
For all the Maidens’ honor ! ”

The first tilt they together rode
They put their steeds to the test ;
The second tilt they together rode,
They proved their manhood best.

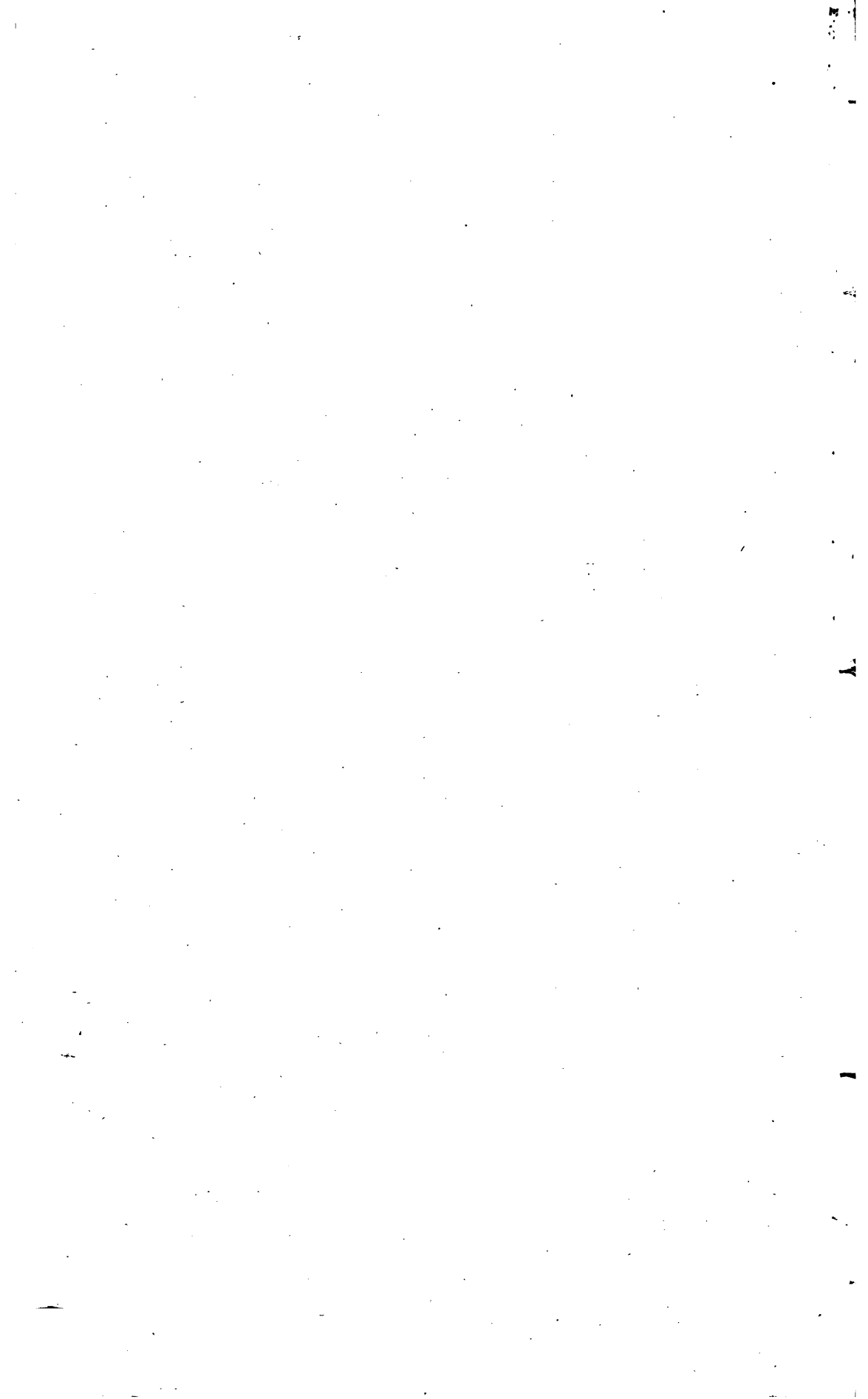
The third tilt they together rode,
Neither of them would yield ;
The fourth tilt they together rode,
They both fell on the field.

Now lie the lords upon the plain,
And their blood runs unto death ;
Now sit the Maidens in the high tower,
The youngest sorrows till death.

THE
CHILDREN
OF
THE LORD'S SUPPER.

FROM THE SWEDISH OF BISHOP TEGNÉR.

H



THE
CHILDREN OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

PENTECOST, day of rejoicing, had come. The
church of the village
Stood gleaming white in the morning's sheen.
On the spire of the belfry,
Tipped with a vane of metal, the friendly flames
of the Spring-sun
Glanced like the tongues of fire, beheld by Apostles
aforetime.

Clear was the heaven and blue, and 'May, with
her cap crowned with roses,
Stood in her holiday dress in the fields, and the
wind and the brooklet
Murmured gladness and peace, God's-peace !
With lips rosy-tinted
Whispered the race of the flowers, and merry
on balancing branches
Birds were singing their carol, a jubilant hymn to
the Highest.
Swept and clean was the churchyard. Adorned
like a leaf-woven arbour
Stood its old-fashioned gate ; and within upon
each cross of iron
Hung was a sweet-scented garland, new twined
by the hands of affection.
Even the dial, that stood on a fountain among the
departed,
(There full a hundred years had it stood,) was
embellished with blossoms.

Like to the patriarch hoary, the sage of his kith
and the hamlet,
Who on his birth-day is crowned by children and
children's children,
So stood the ancient prophet, and mute with his
pencil of iron
Marked on the tablet of stone, and measured the
swift-changing moment,
While all around at his feet, an eternity slumber-
ed in quiet.
Also the church within was adorned, for this was
the season
In which the young, their parents' hope, and the
loved-ones of heaven,
Should at the foot of the altar renew the vows
of their baptism.
Therefore each nook and corner was swept and
cleaned, and the dust was
Blown from the walls and ceiling, and from the
oil-painted benches.

There stood the church like a garden ; the Feast
of the Leafy Pavilions *
Saw we in living presentment. From noble arms
on the church wall
Grew forth a cluster of leaves, and the preach-
er's pulpit of oak-wood .
Budded once more anew, as aforetime the rod
before Aaron.
Wreathed thereon was the Bible with leaves, and
the dove, washed with silver,
Under its canopy fastened, a necklace had on of
wind-flowers.
But in front of the choir, round the altar-piece
painted by Hörberg,†
Crept a garland gigantic ; and bright-curling tress-
es of angels

* The Feast of the Tabernacles ; in Swedish, *Lafhyddo-
högtiden*, the Leaf-huts'-high-tide.

† The peasant-painter of Sweden. He is known chiefly
by his altar-pieces in the village churches.

Peeped, like the sun from a cloud, out of the
shadowy leaf-work.

Likewise the lustre of brass, new-polished, blinked
from the ceiling,

And for lights there were lilies of Pentecost set
in the sockets.

Loud rang the bells already ; the thronging
crowd was assembled

Far from valleys and hills, to list to the holy
preaching.

Hark ! then roll forth at once the mighty tones
from the organ,

Hover like voices from God, aloft like invisible
spirits.

Like as Elias in heaven, when he cast off from
him his mantle,

Even so cast off the soul its garments of earth ;
and with one voice

Chimed in the congregation, and sang an anthem
immortal
Of the sublime Wallin,* of David's harp in the
North-land
Tuned to the choral of Luther ; the song on its
powerful pinions
Took every living soul, and lifted it gently to
heaven,
And every face did shine like the Holy One's
face upon Tabor.
Lo ! there entered then into the church the Reverend
Teacher.
Father he hight and he was in the parish ; a
christianly plainness
Clothed from his head to his feet the old man of
seventy winters.

* A distinguished pulpit-orator and poet. He is particularly remarkable for the beauty and sublimity of his psalms.

Friendly was he to behold, and glad as the herald-
ing angel

Walked he among the crowds, but still a contem-
plative grandeur

Lay on his forehead as clear, as on moss-covered
grave-stone a sun-beam.

As in his inspiration (an evening twilight that
faintly

Gleams in the human soul, even now, from the
day of creation)

Th' Artist, the friend of heaven, imagines Saint
John when in Patmos ;—

Gray, with his eyes uplifted to heaven, so seemed
then the old man ;

Such was the glance of his eye, and such were
his tresses of silver.

All the congregation arose in the pews that were
numbered.

But with a cordial look, to the right and the left
hand, the old man

Nodding all hail and peace, disappeared in the
innermost chancel.

Simply and solemnly now proceeded the Chris-
tian service,
Singing and prayer, and at last an ardent dis-
course from the old man.
Many a moving word and warning, that out of
the heart came
Fell like the dew of the morning, like manna on
those in the desert.
Afterwards, when all was finished, the Teacher
reëntered the chancel,
Followed therein by the young. On the right
hand the boys had their places,
Delicate figures, with close-curling hair and
cheeks rosy-blooming.
But on the left-hand of these, there stood the
tremulous lilies,

Tinged with the blushing light of the morning,
the diffident maidens, —

Folding their hands in prayer, and their eyes cast
down on the pavement.

Now came, with question and answer, the cate-
chism. In the beginning

Answered the children with troubled and falter-
ing voice, but the old man's

Glances of kindness encouraged them soon, and
the doctrines eternal

Flowed, like the waters of fountains, so clear
from lips unpolluted.

Whene'er the answer was closed, and as oft as
they named the Redeemer,

Lowly louted the boys, and lowly the maidens all
courtesied.

Friendly the Teacher stood, like an angel of light
there among them,

And to the children explained he the holy, the
highest, in few words,

Thorough, yet simple and clear, for sublimity
always is simple,

Both in sermon and song, a child can seize on
its meaning.

Even as the green-growing bud is unfolded when
Spring-tide approaches

Leaf by leaf is developed, and, warmed by the
radiant sunshine,

Blushes with purple and gold, till at last the per-
fected blossom

Opens its odorous chalice, and rocks with its
crown in the breezes,

So was unfolded here the Christian lore of sal-
vation,

Line by line from the soul of childhood. The
fathers and mothers

Stood behind them in tears, and were glad at
each well-worded answer.

Now went the old man up to the altar ;— and
straightway transfigured
(So did it seem unto me) was then the affection-
ate Teacher.

Like the Lord's Prophet sublime, and awful as
Death and as Judgment

Stood he, the God-commissioned, the soul-
searcher, earthward descending.

Glances, sharp as a sword, into hearts, that to
him were transparent

Shot he ; his voice was deep, was low like the
thunder afar off.

So on a sudden transfigured he stood there, he
spake and he questioned.

“ This is the faith of the Fathers, the faith the
Apostles delivered,

This is moreover the faith whereunto I baptized
you, while still ye

Lay on your mothers' breasts, and nearer the
portals of heaven.
Slumbering received you then the Holy Church
in its bosom ;
Wakened from sleep are ye now, and the light in
its radiant splendor
Rains from the heaven downward ; — to-day on
the threshold of childhood
Kindly she frees you again, to examine and make
your election,
For she knows nought of compulsion, only con-
viction desireth.
This is the hour of your trial, the turning-point
of existence,
Seed for the coming days ; without revocation
departeth
Now from your lips the confession ; Bethink ye,
before ye make answer !
Think not, O think not with guile to deceive the
questioning Teacher.

Sharp is his eye to-day, and a curse ever rests
upon falsehood.

Enter not with a lie on Life's journey ; the mul-
titude hears you,

Brothers and sisters and parents, what dear upon
earth is and holy

Standeth before your sight as a witness ; the
Judge everlasting

Looks from the sun down upon you, and angels
in waiting beside him

Grave your confession in letters of fire, upon
tablets eternal.

Thus then, — believe ye in God, in the Father
who this world created ?

Him who redeemed it, the Son, and the Spirit
where both are united ?

Will ye promise me here, (a holy promise !) to
cherish

God more than all things earthly, and every man
as a brother ?

Will ye promise me here, to confirm your faith
by your living,

Th' heavenly faith of affection ! to hope, to forgive,
and to suffer,

Be what it may your condition, and walk before
God in uprightness ?

Will ye promise me this before God and man ? ”

— With a clear voice

Answered the young men Yes ! and Yes ! with
lips softly-breathing

Answered the maidens eke. Then dissolved from
the brow of the Teacher

Clouds with the thunders therein, and he spake
on in accents more gentle,

Soft as the evening's breath, as harps by Babylon's
rivers.

“ Hail, then, hail to you all ! To the heir-
dom of heaven be ye welcome !

Children no more from this day, but by covenant
brothers and sisters !

Yet,—for what reason not children ? Of such
is the kingdom of heaven.

Here upon earth an assemblage of children, in
heaven one father,

Ruling them as his own household, — forgiving
in turn and chastising,

That is of human life a picture, as Scripture has
taught us.

Blessed are the pure before God ! Upon purity
and upon virtue

Resteth the Christian Faith ; she herself from on
high is descended.

Strong as a man and pure as a child, is the sum
of the doctrine,

Which the Godlike delivered, and on the cross
suffered and died for.

O ! as ye wander this day from childhood's sa-
cred asylum

Downward and ever downward, and deeper in
Age's chill valley,
O ! how soon will ye come, — too soon ! — and
long to turn backward
Up to its hill-tops again, to the sun-illuminated,
where Judgment
Stood like a father before you, and Pardon, clad
like a mother,
Gave you her hand to kiss, and the loving heart
was forgiven,
Life was a play and your hands grasped after the
roses of heaven !
Seventy years have I lived already ; the father
eternal
Gave to me gladness and care ; but the loveliest
hours of existence,
When I have steadfastly gazed in their eyes, I
have instantly known them,
Known them all, all again ; — they were my
childhood's acquaintance.

Therefore take from henceforth, as guides in the
paths of existence,

Prayer, with her eyes raised to heaven, and Innocence, bride of man's childhood.

Innocence, child beloved, is a guest from the
world of the blessed,

Beautiful, and in her hand a lily ; on life's roaring billows

Swings she in safety, she heedeth them not, in
the ship she is sleeping.

Calmly she gazes around in the turmoil of men ;
in the desert

Angels descend and minister unto her ; she herself knoweth

Naught of her glorious attendance ; but follows
faithful and humble,

Follows so long as she may her friend ; O do
not reject her,

For she cometh from God and she holdeth the
keys of the heavens.—

Prayer is Innocence' friend ; and willingly flyeth
incessant

'Twixt the earth and the sky, the carrier-pigeon
of heaven.

Son of Eternity, fettered in Time, and an exile,
the Spirit

Tugs at his chains evermore, and struggles like
flames ever upward.

Still he recalls with emotion his father's manifold
mansions,

Thinks of the land of his fathers, where blossomed
more freshly the flowers,

Shone a more beautiful sun, and he played with
the wingèd angels.

Then grows the earth too narrow, too close ; and
homesick for heaven

Longs the wanderer again ; and the Spirit's long-
ings are worship ;

Worship is called his most beautiful hour, and its
tongue is entreaty.

Ah ! when the infinite burden of life descendeth
upon us,
Crushes to earth our hope, and, under the earth,
in the grave-yard,—
Then it is good to pray unto God ; for his sor-
rowing children
Turns he ne'er from his door, but he heals and
helps and consoles them.
Yet is it better to pray when all things are pros-
perous with us,
Pray in fortunate days, for life's most beautiful
Fortune
Kneels down before the Eternal's throne ; and,
with hands interfolded,
Praises thankful and moved the only giver of
blessings.
Or do ye know, ye children, one blessing that
comes not from Heaven ?
What has mankind forsooth, the poor ! that it has
not received ?

Therefore, fall in the dust and pray ! The ser-
aphs adoring
Cover with pinions six their face in the glory of
him who
Hung his masonry pendant on naught, when the
world he created.
Earth declareth his might, and the firmament ut-
tereth his glory.
Races blossom and die, and stars fall downward
from heaven,
Downward like withered leaves ; at the last
stroke of midnight, millenniums
Lay themselves down at his feet, and he sees
them, but counts them as nothing.
Who shall stand in his presence ? The wrath
of the judge is terrific,
Casting the insolent down at a glance. When he
speaks in his anger
Hillocks skip like the kid, and mountains leap
like the roe-buck.

Yet, — why are ye afraid, ye children? This
awful avenger,

Ah! is a merciful God! God's voice was not in
the earthquake

Not in the fire, nor the storm, but it was in the
whispering breezes.

Love is the root of creation; God's essence;
worlds without number

Lie in his bosom like children; he made them
for this purpose only.

Only to love and to be loved again, he breathed
forth his spirit

Into the slumbering dust, and upright standing, it
laid its

Hand on its heart, and felt it was warm with a
flame out of heaven.

Quench, O quench not that flame! It is the
breath of your being.

Love is life, but hatred is death. Not father, nor
mother

Loved you, as God has loved you ; for 't was
that you may be happy
Gave he his only son. When he bowed down
his head in the death-hour
Solemnized Love its triumph ; the sacrifice then
was completed.
Lo ! then was rent on a sudden the vail of the
temple, dividing
Earth and heaven apart, and the dead from their
sepulchres rising
Whispered with pallid lips and low in the ears of
each other
Th' answer, but dreamed of before, to creation's
enigma, — Atonement !
Depths of Love are Atonement's depths, for Love
is Atonement.
Therefore, child of mortality, love thou the mer-
ciful Father ;
Wish what the Holy One wishes, and not from
fear, but affection ;

Fear is the virtue of slaves ; but the heart that
loveth is willing ;

Perfect was before God, and perfect is Love,
and Love only.

Lovest thou God as thou oughtest, then lovest
thou likewise thy brethren ;

One is the sun in heaven, and one, only one, is
Love also.

Bears not each human figure the godlike stamp on
his forehead ?

Readest thou not in his face thine origin ? Is he
not sailing

Lost like thyself on an ocean unknown, and is
he not guided

By the same stars that guide thee ? Why shouldst
thou hate then thy brother ?

Hateth he thee, forgive ! For 't is sweet to stam-
mer one letter

Of the Eternal's language ; — on earth it is called
Forgiveness !

Knowest thou Him, who forgave, with the crown
of thorns round his temples ?

Earnestly prayed for his foes, for his murderers ?
Say, dost thou know him ?

Ah ! thou confessest his name, so follow likewise
his example,

Think of thy brother no ill, but throw a veil over
his failings,

Guide the erring aright ; for the good, the heav-
enly shepherd

Took the lost lamb in his arms, and bore it back
to its mother.

This is the fruit of Love, and it is by its fruits that
we know it.

Love is the creature's welfare, with God ; but
Love among mortals

Is but an endless sigh ! He longs, and endures,
and stands waiting,

Suffers and yet rejoices, and smiles with tears on
his eyelids.

Hope, — so is called upon earth, his recompense.

— Hope, the befriending,

Does what she can, for she points evermore up
to heaven, and faithful

Plunges her anchor's peak in the depths of the
grave, and beneath it

Paints a more beautiful world, a dim, but a sweet
play of shadows !

Races, better than we, have leaned on her waver-
ing promise,

Having naught else beside Hope. Then praise
we our Father in heaven,

Him, who has given us more ; for to us has Hope
been illumined,

Groping no longer in night ; she is Faith, she is
living assurance.

Faith is enlightened Hope ; she is light, is the eye
of affection,

Dreams of the longing interprets, and carves
their visions in marble.

Faith is the sun of life ; and her countenance
shines like the Prophet's,
For she has looked upon God ; the heaven on
its stable foundation
Draws she with chains down to earth, and the
New Jerusalem sinketh
Splendid with portals twelve in golden vapors
descending.
There enraptured she wanders, and looks at the
figures majestic,
Fears not the wingèd crowd, in the midst of them
all is her homestead.
Therefore love and believe ; for works will follow
spontaneous
Even as day does the sun ; the Right from the
Good is an offspring,
Love in a bodily shape ; and Christian works are
no more than
Animate Love and faith, as flowers are the ani-
mate spring-tide.

Works do follow us all unto God ; there stand
and bear witness

Not what they seemed, — but what they were
only. Blessed is he who

Hears their confession secure ; they are mute
upon earth until death's hand

Opens the mouth of the silent. Ye children,
does Death e'er alarm you ?

Death is the brother of Love, twin-brother is he,
and is only

More austere to behold. With a kiss upon lips
that are fading

Takes he the soul and departs, and rocked in
the arms of affection,

Places the ransomed child, new born, 'fore the
face of its father.

Sounds of his coming already I hear, — see dim-
ly his pinions,

Swart as the night, but with stars strewn upon
them ! I fear not before him.

Death is only release, and in mercy is mute.
On his bosom
Freer breathes, in its coolness, my breast ; and
face to face standing
Look I on God as he is, a sun unpolluted by
vapors ;
Look on the light of the ages I loved, the spirits
majestic,
Nobler, better than I ; they stand by the throne
all transfigured,
Vested in white, and with harps of gold, and are
singing an anthem,
Writ in the climate of heaven, in the language
spoken by angels.
You, in like manner, ye children beloved, he one
day shall gather,
Never forgets he the weary ;— then welcome, ye
loved ones, hereafter !
Meanwhile forget not the keeping of vows, forget
not the promise,

Wander from holiness onward to holiness ; earth
shall ye heed not ;

Earth is but dust and heaven is light ; I have
pledged you to heaven.

God of the Universe, hear me ! thou fountain of
Love everlasting,

Hark to the voice of thy servant ! I send up my
prayer to thy heaven !

Let me hereafter not miss at thy throne one spirit
of all these,

Whom thou hast given me here ! I have loved
them all like a father.

May they bear witness for me, that I taught them
the way of salvation,

Faithful, so far as I knew of thy word ; again
may they know me,

Fall on their Teacher's breast, and before thy
face may I place them,

Pure as they now are, but only more tried, and
exclaiming with gladness,

Father, lo ! I am here, and the children, whom
thou hast given me ! ”

Weeping he spake in these words ; and now at
the beck of the old man
Knee against knee they knitted a wreath round
the altar's enclosure.
Kneeling he read then the prayers of the conse-
cration, and softly
With him the children read ; at the close, with
tremulous accents,
Asked he the peace of heaven, a benediction
upon them.
Now should have ended his task for the day ; the
following Sunday
Was for the young appointed to eat of the Lord's
holy Supper.
Sudden, as struck from the clouds, stood the
Teacher silent and laid his

Hand on his forehead, and cast his looks upward ;
while thoughts high and holy
Flew through the midst of his soul, and his eyes
glanced with wonderful brightness.
“On the next Sunday, who knows ! perhaps I
shall rest in the grave-yard !
Some one perhaps of yourselves, a lily broken
untimely,
Bow down his head to the earth ; why delay I ?
the hour is accomplished.
Warm is the heart ; — I will so ! for to-day grows
the harvest of heaven.
What I began accomplish I now ; for what fail-
ing therein is
I, the old man, will answer to God and the rev-
erend father.
Say to me only, ye children, ye denizens new-
come in heaven,
Are ye ready this day to eat of the bread of
Atonement ?

What it denoteth, that know ye full well, I have
told it you often.

Of the new covenant a symbol it is, of Atonement
a token,

Stablished between earth and heaven. Man by
his sins and transgressions

Far has wandered from God, from his essence.

'T was in the beginning

Fast by the Tree of Knowledge he fell, and it
hangs its crown o'er the

Fall to this day; in the Thought is the Fall; in
the Heart the Atonement.

Infinite is the Fall, the Atonement infinite like-
wise.

See! behind me, as far as the old man remem-
bers, and forward,

Far as Hope in her flight can reach with her
wearied pinions,

Sin and Atonement incessant go through the life-
time of mortals.

Brought forth is sin full-grown ; but Atonement
sleeps in our bosoms
Still as the cradled babe ; and dreams of heaven
and of angels,
Cannot awake to sensation ; is like the tones in
the harp's strings,
Spirits imprisoned, that wait evermore the deliverer's finger.
Therefore, ye children beloved, descended the
Prince of Atonement,
Woke the slumberer from sleep, and she stands
now with eyes all resplendent,
Bright as the vault of the sky, and battles with
Sin and o'ercomes her.
Downward to earth he came and transfigured,
thence reascended,
Not from the heart in like wise, for there he still
lives in the Spirit,
Loves and atones evermore. So long as Time
is, is Atonement.

Therefore with reverence receive this day her
visible token.

Tokens are dead if the things do not live. The
light everlasting

Unto the blind man is not, but is born of the eye
that has vision.

Neither in bread nor in wine, but in the heart
that is hallowed

Lieth forgiveness enshrined ; the intention alone
of amendment

Fruits of the earth ennobles to heavenly things,
and removes all

Sin and the guerdon of sin. Only Love with
his arms wide extended,

Penitence weeping and praying ; the Will that is
tried, and whose gold flows

Purified forth from the flames ; in a word, man-
kind by Atonement

Breaketh Atonement's bread, and drinketh Atone-
ment's wine-cup.

But he who cometh up hither, unworthy, with
hate in his bosom,
Scoffing at men and at God, is guilty of Christ's
blessed body,
And the Redeemer's blood ! To himself he
eateth and drinketh
Death and doom ! And from this, preserve us,
thou heavenly Father !
Are ye ready, ye children, to eat of the bread
of Atonement ? ”
Thus with emotion he asked, and together answered the children
Yes ! with deep sobs interrupted. Then read
he the due supplications,
Read the Form of Communion, and in chimed
the organ and anthem ;
O ! Holy Lamb of God, who takest away our
transgressions,
Hear us ! give us thy peace ! have mercy, have
mercy upon us !

Th' old man, with trembling hand, and heavenly
pearls on his eyelids,

Filled now the chalice and paten, and dealt round
the mystical symbols.

O! then seemed it to me, as if God, with the
broad eye of mid-day,

Clearer looked in at the windows, and all the
trees in the churchyard

Bowed down their summits of green, and the
grass on the graves 'gan to shiver.

But in the children, (I noted it well; I knew it)
there ran a

Tremor of holy rapture along through their icy-
cold members.

Decked like an altar before them, there stood
the green earth, and above it

Heaven opened itself, as of old before Stephen;
there saw they

Radiant in glory the Father, and on his right
hand the Redeemer.

Under them hear they the clang of harpstrings,
and angels from gold clouds
Beckon to them like brothers, and fan with their
pinions of purple.

Closed was the Teacher's task, and with heav-
en in their hearts and their faces,
Up rose the children all, and each bowed him,
weeping full sorely,
Downward to kiss that reverend hand, but all of
them pressed he
Moved to his bosom, and laid, with a prayer,
his hands full of blessings,
Now on the holy breast, and now on the inno-
cent tresses.



MISCELLANEOUS.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

UNDER a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands ;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands ;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan ;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow ;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door ;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys ;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise !
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies ;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, — rejoicing, — sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes ;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close ;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught !
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought ;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought !

ENDYMION.

THE rising moon has hid the stars ;
Her level rays, like golden bars,
Lie on the landscape green,
With shadows brown between.

And silver white the river gleams,
As if Diana, in her dreams,
Had dropt her silver bow
Upon the meadows low.

On such a tranquil night as this,
She woke Endymion with a kiss,
When, sleeping in the grove,
He dreamed not of her love.

Like Dian's kiss, unasked, unsought,
Love gives itself, but is not bought ;
Nor voice, nor sound betrays
Its deep, impassioned gaze.

It comes, — the beautiful, the free,
The crown of all humanity, —
In silence and alone
To seek the elected one.

It lifts the boughs, whose shadows deep,
Are Life's oblivion, the soul's sleep,
And kisses the closed eyes
Of him, who slumbering lies.

O, weary hearts ! O, slumbering eyes !
O, drooping souls, whose destinies
Are fraught with fear and pain,
Ye shall be loved again !

No one is so accursed by fate,
No one so utterly desolate,
But some heart, though unknown,
Responds unto his own.

Responds, — as if with unseen wings,
A breath from heaven had touched its strings;
And whispers, in its song,
“Where hast thou stayed so long !”

THE TWO LOCKS OF HAIR.

FROM THE GERMAN OF PFIZER.

A YOUTH, light-hearted and content,
I wander through the world ;
Here, Arab-like, is pitched my tent
And straight again is furled.

Yet oft I dream, that once a wife
Close in my heart was locked,
And in the sweet repose of life
A blessed child I rocked.

I wake ! Away that dream, — away !
Too long did it remain !
So long, that both by night and day
It ever comes again.

The end lies ever in my thought ;
To a grave so cold and deep
The mother beautiful was brought ;
Then dropt the child asleep.

But now the dream is wholly o'er,
I bathe mine eyes and see ;
And wander through the world once more,
A youth so light and free.

Two locks, — and they are wondrous fair, —
Left me that vision mild ;
The brown is from the mother's hair,
The blond is from the child.

And when I see that lock of gold,
Pale grows the evening-red ;
And when the dark lock I behold,
I wish that I were dead.

IT IS NOT ALWAYS MAY.

NO HAY PÁJAROS EN LOS NIDOS DE ANTAÑO.

Spanish Proverb.

THE sun is bright, — the air is clear,
 The darting swallows soar and sing,
 And from the stately elms I hear
 The blue-bird prophesying Spring.

So blue yon winding river flows,
 It seems an outlet from the sky,
 Where waiting till the west wind blows,
 The freighted clouds at anchor lie.

All things are new ; — the buds, the leaves,
That gild the elm-tree's nodding crest,
And even the nest beneath the eaves ; —
There are no birds in last year's nest !

All things rejoice in youth and love,
The fulness of their first delight !
And learn from the soft heavens above
The melting tenderness of night.

Maiden, that read'st this simple rhyme,
Enjoy thy youth, it will not stay ;
Enjoy the fragrance of thy prime,
For O ! it is not always May !

Enjoy the Spring of Love and Youth,
To some good angel leave the rest ;
For Time will teach thee soon the truth,
There are no birds in last year's nest !

THE RAINY DAY.

THE day is cold, and dark, and dreary ;
It rains, and the wind is never weary ;
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
 And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary ;
It rains, and the wind is never weary ;
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering Past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast
 And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart ! and cease repining ;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining ;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

GOD'S-ACRE.

I LIKE that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls
The burial-ground God's-Acre ! It is just ;
It consecrates each grave within its walls,
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.

God's-Acre ! Yes, that blessed name imparts
Comfort to those, who in the grave have sown
The seed, that they had garnered in their hearts,
Their bread of life, alas ! no more their own.

Into its furrows shall we all be cast,
In the sure faith, that we shall rise again
At the great harvest, when the arch-angel's blast
Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain.

Then shall the good stand in immortal bloom,
In the fair gardens of that second birth ;
And each bright blossom, mingle its perfume
With that of flowers, which never bloomed on
earth.

With thy rude ploughshare, Death, turn up the sod,
And spread the furrow for the seed we sow ;
This is the field and Acre of our God.
This is the place, where human harvests grow !

TO THE RIVER CHARLES.

RIVER ! that in silence windest
 Through the meadows, bright and free,
 Till at length thy rest thou findest
 In the bosom of the sea !

Four long years of mingled feeling,
 Half in rest, and half in strife,
 I have seen thy waters stealing
 Onward, like the stream of life.

Thou has taught me, Silent River !
Many a lesson, deep and long ;
Thou hast been a generous giver ;
I can give thee but a song.

Oft in sadness and in illness,
I have watched thy current glide,
Till the beauty of its stillness
Overflowed me, like a tide.

And in better hours and brighter,
When I saw thy waters gleam,
I have felt my heart beat lighter,
And leap onward with thy stream.

Not for this alone I love thee,
Nor because, thy waves of blue
From celestial seas above thee
Take their own celestial hue.

Where yon shadowy woodlands hide thee,
And thy waters disappear,
Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,
And have made thy margin dear.

More than this ; — thy name reminds me
Of three friends, all true and tried ;
And that name, like magic, binds me
Closer, closer to thy side.

Friends my soul with joy remembers !
How like quivering flames they start,
When I fan the living embers
On the hearth-stone of my heart !

'T is for this, thou Silent River !
That my spirit leans to thee ;
Thou hast been a generous giver,
Take this idle song from me.

BLIND BARTIMEUS.

BLIND Bartimeus at the gates
Of Jericho in darkness waits ;
He hears the crowd ; — he hears a breath
Say, “ It is Christ of Nazareth ! ”
And calls, in tones of agony,
Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με !

The thronging multitudes increase ;
 Blind Bartimeus, hold thy peace !
 But still, above the noisy crowd,
 The beggar's cry is shrill and loud ;
 Until they say, " He calleth thee ! "
Θάρσει, ἔγειραι, φωνεῖ σε !

Then saith the Christ, as silent stands
 The crowd, " What wilt thou at my hands ? "
 And he replies, " O give me light !
 Rabbi, restore the blind man's sight ! "
 And Jesus answers, " *Ἰπαγε* .
Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε !

Ye that have eyes, yet cannot see;
 In darkness and in misery,
 Recall those mighty Voices Three,
Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με !
Θάρσει, ἔγειραι, ὕπαγε !
Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε !

THE GOBLET OF LIFE.

FILLED is Life's goblet to the brim ;
And though my eyes with tears are dim,
I see its sparkling bubbles swim,
And chaunt a melancholy hymn
With solemn voice and slow.

No purple flowers, — no garlands green,
Conceal the goblet's shade or sheen,
Nor maddening draughts of Hippocrene,
Like gleams of sunshine, flash between
Thick leaves of mistletoe.

This goblet, wrought with curious art,
Is filled with waters, that upstart,
When the deep fountains of the heart,
By strong convulsions rent apart,
Are running all to waste.

And as it mantling passes round,
With fennel is it wreathed and crowned,
Whose seed and foliage sun-imbrowned
Are in its waters steeped and drowned,
And give a bitter taste.

Above the lowly plants it towers,
The fennel, with its yellow flowers,
And in an earlier age than ours
Was gifted with the wondrous powers,
Lost vision to restore.

It gave new strength, and fearless mood ;
And gladiators, fierce and rude,
Mingled it in their daily food ;
And he who battled and subdued,
A wreath of fennel wore.

Then in Life's goblet freely press,
The leaves that give it bitterness,
Nor prize the colored waters less,
For in thy darkness and distress
New light and strength they give !

And he who has not learned to know
How false its sparkling bubbles show,
How bitter are the drops of woe,
With which its brim may overflow,
He has not learned to live.

The prayer of Ajax was for light ;
Through all that dark and desperate fight,
The blackness of that noonday night,
He asked but the return of sight,
To see his foeman's face.

Let our unceasing, earnest prayer
Be, too, for light, — for strength to bear
Our portion of the weight of care,
That crushes into dumb despair
One half the human race.

O suffering, sad humanity !
O ye afflicted ones, who lie
Steeped to the lips in misery,
Longing, and yet afraid to die,
Patient, though sorely tried !

I pledge you in this cup of grief,
Where floats the fennel's bitter leaf!
The Battle of our Life is brief,
The alarm, — the struggle, — the relief, —
Then sleep we side by side.

MAIDENHOOD.

MAIDEN ! with the meek, brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies
Like the dusk in evening skies !

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run !

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet !

Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse !

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision,
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian ?

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly ?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar ?

O, thou child of many prayers !
Life hath quicksands, — Life hath snares !
Care and age come unawares !

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered ; —
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand ;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

O, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds, that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal ;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

EXCELSIOR.

THE shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner with the strange device
Excelsior !

His brow was sad ; his eye beneath,
Flashed like a faulchion from its sheath,
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
Excelsior !

In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright ;
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
Excelsior !

“ Try not the Pass ! ” the old man said ;
“ Dark lowers the tempest overhead,
The roaring torrent is deep and wide ! ”
And loud that clarion voice replied
Excelsior !

“ O stay, ” the maiden said, “ and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast ! ”
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,
But still he answered, with a sigh,
Excelsior !

"Beware the pine-tree's withered branch!
Beware the awful avalanche!"
This was the peasant's last Good-night,
A voice replied, far up the height,
Excelsior!

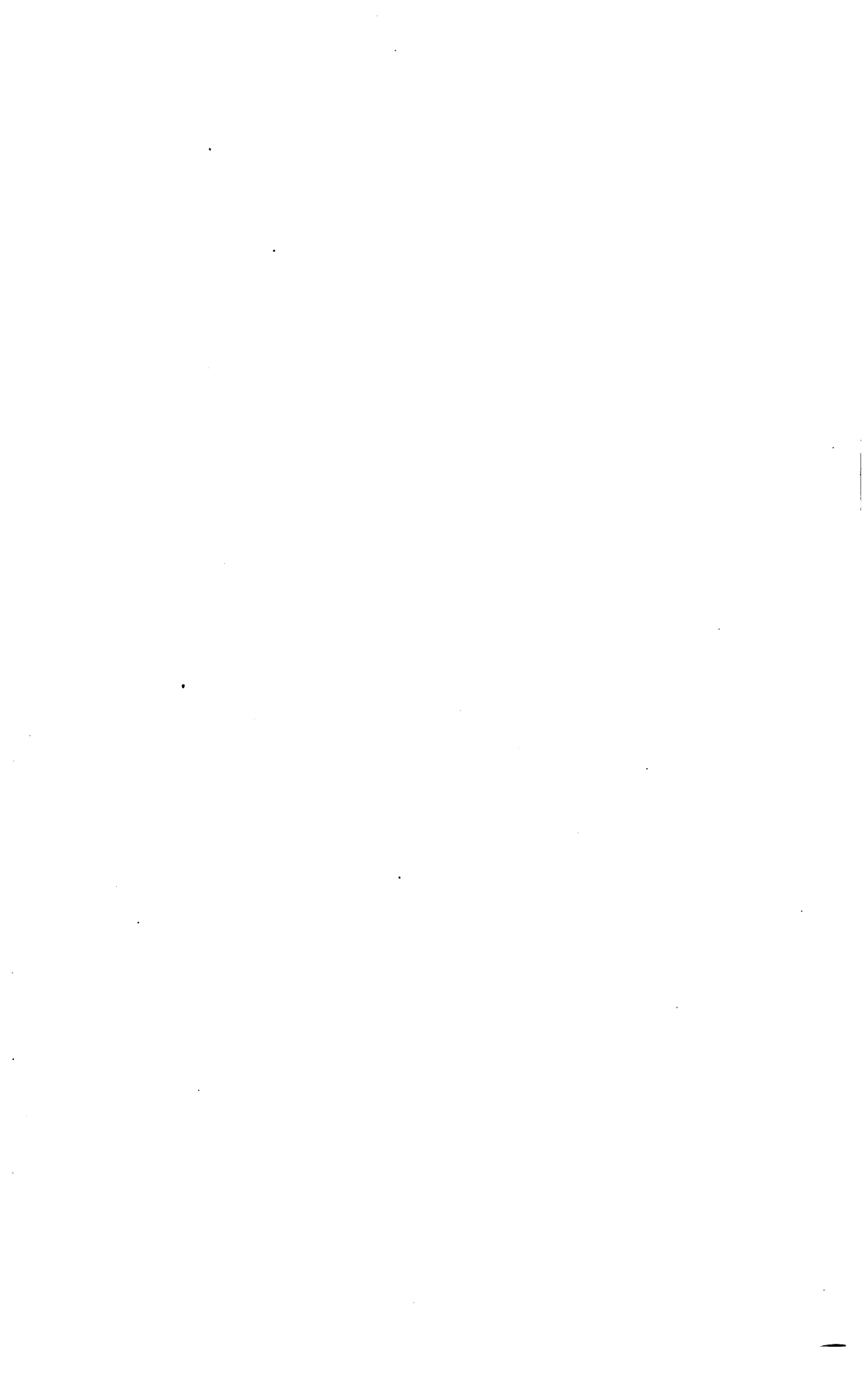
At break of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of Saint Bernard
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air
Excelsior!

A traveller, by the faithful hound,
Half-buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device
Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior !

END.

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F. G.
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